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# essentials

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32 PAGE MAGAZINE
Make it easy!
Inside...

## 137 ways to treat yourself!

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You'll feel so much better

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# Make it easy!

## How to... spend less & live better!

**Bring a dish dinner party – less cooking for you!**

**Family faves with a healthy twist (no, they won't notice!)**

**Cog au vin... try something different for Sunday lunch**

**It's a pud and cake – and it's *so* easy to make**

### What's happening in March...

**How to get your dream garden**

**Tips to keep your clothes like new**

**From cute makes to jewellery – what's your new hobby?**

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How to

# Bring-a-dish dinner party

## (save time... save money... save stress!)

Cooking for a crowd needn't be tricky – just get your friends to pitch in and bring along a starter and a pud, you cook up the main, and there you have it, a fabulous fuss-free dinner party! Now all you have to do is crack open the wine

**ALL RECIPES SERVE 6 UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED**

The Bring-A-Dish Party Menu

To start...
Herby goats' cheese pâté
& ciabatta toast

—//—

For Main...
Posh chicken & porcini filo bake
French-style vegetable medley
Crispy pancetta roasties
Garlicky carrot & squash mash

—//—

For pud...
Boozy choc truffle pots

The time you save cooking can be spent pampering you!

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TO START

## Herby goats' cheese pâté

**This is really easy to make ahead – and for a guest to transport!**

Ready in 15 mins
• 408 cals per serving
• 24g fat • 14g sat fat

- ☐ 1x275g ciabatta
- ☐ 1tbsp olive oil
- ☐ 450g soft goats' cheese
- ☐ 1 clove garlic, crushed
- ☐ 50g rocket leaves
- ☐ 20g mint leaves
- ☐ the zest and juice of ½ lemon
- ☐ 2tbsp capers in brine, drained and rinsed
- ☐ 120g sunblush tomatoes in oil, drained

1 Heat the grill to high or a griddle pan until hot. Cut the **ciabatta** into thin slices. Brush both sides lightly with **olive oil** and toast for 1–2 mins, turning halfway, until golden and crisp

2 Put the **goats' cheese** into a food processor with the **garlic**, **rocket leaves**, **mint leaves** and **lemon zest** and **juice**; season with black pepper and blend. Spoon the mix into small ramekins and top with the **capers** and **sunblush tomatoes**. Serve with ciabatta toasts.

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### What to drink

**For the goats' cheese starter try a French Sauvignon like this great-value Vin de Pays du Val de Loire Sauvignon Blanc 2008, £4.99, from M&S.**

**tip** If you're not a fan of goats' cheese, this works really well with cream cheese, too.

FOR MAIN

# Posh chicken & porcini filo bake

**Really moreish, this lovely new way with chicken will convince friends you're the next Nigella!**

Ready in 1 hr • 353 cals per serving • 18g fat • 9g sat fat

- ☐ 1 onion, chopped
- ☐ 2tbsp olive oil
- ☐ a few sprigs thyme
- ☐ 375g chestnut mushrooms, sliced
- ☐ 15g porcini mushrooms, soaked in 200ml boiling water
- ☐ 60g butter
- ☐ 25g plain flour
- ☐ 100ml white wine
- ☐ 150ml single cream
- ☐ 1tbsp wholegrain mustard
- ☐ 750g free-range chicken breast or filleted thigh meat – poach in simmering water for 15 mins until cooked, then shred
- ☐ 1 small bunch parsley, chopped
- ☐ 1 small bunch tarragon, chopped
- ☐ 5 sheets filo pastry

1 Heat oven to Mark 6/200°C. Fry **onion** in **oil** with the **thyme** until golden. Add **chestnut mushrooms** and brown them; remove from pan and set aside.

2 Drain **porcini mushrooms**, reserving liquor, chop and add to cooked mushrooms. Drain liquor through kitchen paper into a jug.

3 Melt 20g **butter** in a small pan, add **flour** and cook for 1 min, stirring. Pour in the **wine**, stirring until smooth. Add mushroom liquor, **cream** and **mustard**; stir until thickened. Season well and mix with the mushrooms, **chicken** and **herbs**.

4 Lay 1 sheet **filo** on a work surface and brush with remaining butter, melted; add another sheet, overlapping the long edge by 5cm. Top with 2 more sheets of filo. Spoon the filling down the middle, fold filo over, tucking in the ends to make a neat parcel.

5 Transfer to an oiled baking tray. Butter a final sheet of filo and loosely scrunch on top to cover. Brush with butter, and bake for 20–25 mins until golden.

**tip** For a veggie alternative, swap the chicken for an extra 300g of mixed mushrooms, plus a 280g jar marinated artichokes, drained, and 25g Parmesan.

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## CRISPY PANCETTA ROASTIES

**Ready in 55 mins • 213 cals per serving • 9g fat • 2g sat fat**

Heat oven to Mark 6/200°C. Cook 1kg potatoes, peeled and sliced 1cm thick in boiling water for 5 mins. Drain, return to the pan and mix with 2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced, and 3tbsp extra virgin oil. Season well. Transfer to a roasting tin and scatter over 70g pancetta slices, cut into short strips. Pour over 75ml dry white wine and roast for 40 mins, turning occasionally, until golden.

## GARLICKY CARROT & SQUASH MASH

**Ready in 50 mins • 113 cals per serving • 4g fat • 0.6g sat fat**

Heat oven to Mark 6/200°C. Put 700g carrots, peeled, halved lengthways and cut into 4cm chunks, into a roasting tin. Toss with 1tbsp olive oil and roast for 15 mins. Add 1 medium butternut squash, peeled, deseeded and cut into 4cm chunks. Drizzle with 1tbsp olive oil. Scatter with 2 sprigs thyme, leaves only, and 2 cloves garlic, sliced. Roast for a further 30 mins until tender. Remove from oven, roughly mash together and season.

### What to drink

• To go with the chicken, try Domaine Paul Mas Vignes de Nicole Chardonnay Viognier, from Majestic, £8.99, it has lovely floral honey and peach flavours.

**tip** Roast extra carrots and blend with vegetable stock for a tasty soup.

## FRENCH-STYLE VEGETABLE MEDLEY

**Ready in 15 mins • 62 cals per serving • 4g fat • 2g sat fat**

Blanch 300g green beans, trimmed, in boiling water for 3 mins, then drain and refresh in cold water. Melt 25g butter in a pan, add 6 shallots, peeled and sliced, and fry until soft and golden. Add 100ml white wine and 3tsp Dijon mustard and bubble until reduced by two-thirds. Add beans and stir until heated through. Toss with 100g baby leaf spinach before serving.

**tip** The dressing works with any green veg – try it with broccoli and peas.

>

FOR PUD

# Boozy choc truffle pots

**Rich and very very naughty – what's not to like?**

Ready in 30 mins + chilling
- 718 cals per serving
- 54g fat 25g sat fat

FOR THE BASE
- 75g butter
- 75g amaretti biscuits, crushed
- 75g digestives, crushed
- 25g toasted flaked almonds, crushed

FOR THE FILLING
- 150g dark chocolate
- 250g ricotta cheese
- 100g cream cheese
- 4tbsp icing sugar
- 100ml double cream, softly whipped, plus extra to serve
- 4tbsp amaretto or brandy
- 25g flaked almonds, to serve
- 1½tsp caster sugar
- 75g ready-made chocolate sauce

1 For the base, melt the **butter** and stir into the crushed **biscuits** and toasted **almonds**. Spoon the mixture into small glasses and chill.

2 For the filling, melt the **chocolate** in a bowl set over a pan of barely simmering water, then leave to cool slightly.

3 Beat together the **ricotta**, **cream cheese** and **icing sugar** until smooth. Fold in the **cream** and whisk until thick. Fold in the melted chocolate with the **amaretto** or **brandy** and spoon the mixture on top of the base. Chill until ready to serve.

4 Toast the **flaked almonds** in a non-stick pan until golden. Add the **caster sugar** and stir until it melts and you have small clusters of nuts. Leave to cool. Before serving, top with a dollop of whipped cream, sprinkle the almonds over and drizzle with chocolate sauce.

**tip** Layer these up ahead and chill until ready to serve. If you want to make one big bowl rather than small pots, layer up in a trifle dish and chill. Transport in a cool box.

## What to drink

If you prefer a soft fruity red, try Banrock Station's Shiraz Mataro 2008 £5.99. It's very drinkable with plum and raspberry flavours – from major supermarkets.

FEATURE & FOOD STYLING: LUCY JESSOP & PHIL MUNDY. ASSISTED BY: LUCY GOODCHILD. PHOTOS: STUART WEST. PROPS: RACHEL JUKES

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How to

# It's Sunday lunch ...but not as you know it!

Bored with your usual weekend roast? Then try one of these gourmet-style dishes – it's OK, you can still have the roasties!

**ALL RECIPES SERVE 6 UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED**

## Smoky pork, chorizo & butterbean hot pot

**The ultimate comfort food – the smoky paprika gives a lovely warming kick, fab with crispy roasties**

Ready in 1 hr 30 mins • 635 cals per serving • 25g fat • 9g sat fat

- ☐ 1tbsp olive oil
- ☐ 1.4kg pork shoulder, cut into large chunks
- ☐ 350g chorizo, thickly sliced
- ☐ 2 red onions, cut into wedges
- ☐ 2 red peppers, deseeded and cut into chunky pieces
- ☐ 1½tsp smoked paprika
- ☐ 2x400g tins chopped tomatoes
- ☐ 75ml pale dry sherry
- ☐ 2x400g tins butterbeans, drained and rinsed
- ☐ 1tsp brown sugar
- ☐ small handful flat-leaf parsley, chopped

1 Heat the **oil** in a large heavy-based pan. Brown the **pork** in batches over a high heat. Remove from the pan and set aside.

2 Fry the **chorizo** for 2 mins over a medium heat, then add the **onions** and **peppers** and continue frying for another 5 mins.

3 Return the pork to the pan and add the **paprika**, **tomatoes** and **sherry**. Bring to the boil, then lower the heat and simmer with the lid on for 45 mins. Add the **butterbeans** and **sugar** and simmer, uncovered, for a further 15 mins. Season to taste and stir through the **parsley** just before serving.

>

**tip** Use whatever cut of chicken you have – on the bone is best. A cheap way to do it is to buy a whole chicken and ask the butcher to joint it for you.

## The ultimate coq au vin

**Everyone loves this classic – serve with garlicky, buttery mash and it's a winner!**

Ready in 2 hrs • 380 cals per serving • 13g fat • 4g sat fat

- ½tbsp olive oil
- 12 free-range chicken thighs, skin on or if using a jointed chicken you'll need about 1.5kg
- 400g baby shallots, peeled and kept whole
- 140g pancetta, cubed
- 2 sticks celery, sliced
- 6 garlic cloves, peeled and finely chopped
- 750ml robust French red wine such as Côtes du Rhône Villages
- 200ml chicken stock
- 2 sprigs of thyme
- 1 sprig of rosemary
- 1–2 bay leaves
- 1tbsp butter
- 1tbsp plain flour
- 1tbsp redcurrant jelly

1 Heat the **oil** in a heavy-based casserole. Fry the **chicken** in batches, skin-side down, until golden. Remove and set aside while you fry the **shallots** until golden. Add the **pancetta** and cook for 2 mins, then add the **celery** and **garlic** and cook gently for 5–10 mins.
2 Increase heat, add the **wine**, **stock** and **herbs**. Bring to the boil, return the chicken to the pan and reduce the heat. Simmer, uncovered, for 45 mins–1 hr until chicken is tender. Remove the chicken and as many shallots as possible to a warm plate.
3 Increase heat and boil the gravy rapidly for about 10 mins until reduced by a third.
4 In a small pan, melt the **butter**, add the **flour** and cook, stirring, for 1 min. Add to the gravy a little at a time, whisking until combined and it thickens. Season and stir in the **redcurrant jelly**. Put the chicken and shallots back in the pan, stir and serve.

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# Slow-cooked beef & mushroom stroganoff

**Using fillet steak for this dish is pricey, so try our great-value (but just as tasty) version using braising steak.**

Ready in 1 hr 40 mins • 514 cals per serving • 34g fat • 14g sat fat

- ☐ 3tbsp olive oil
- ☐ 1.2kg free-range braising steak, cut into strips and tossed in 2tbsp seasoned plain flour
- ☐ 2 onions, sliced
- ☐ 4 cloves garlic, chopped
- ☐ 2tsp paprika
- ☐ 100ml brandy
- ☐ 650ml good-quality beef stock
- ☐ 10g porcini mushrooms, soaked in 100ml boiling water
- ☐ 2 sprigs thyme
- ☐ 250g button mushrooms, large ones thickly sliced
- ☐ 150ml double cream
- ☐ 2tbsp parsley, chopped

1 Heat 1tbsp **oil** in a large, heavy-based frying pan. Fry the **beef** on a high heat in batches until browned. Remove from the pan and set aside.

2 Heat 1tbsp oil, then add the **onion** and **garlic** to the pan and gently fry on a low heat until soft. Return the beef to the pan and stir in the **paprika**.

3 Increase the heat, pour in the **brandy** and bubble for 2-3 mins, then add the **stock** and **porcini mushrooms** with the soaking liquid and **thyme**. Bring to the boil and cover with a lid. Cook over a low heat for 45 mins.

4 Meanwhile, heat the remaining oil in a frying pan and fry the **button mushrooms** on a high heat until golden. After the beef has been cooking for 45 mins add the button mushrooms and cook for a further 30 mins, uncovered, until the meat is really tender and the sauce has reduced slightly.

5 Stir through the **cream** and season to taste. Stir through the **parsley** and serve with buttery mash and green veg.

**tip** You can make this the day before. Make up to end of step 4 then, when ready to serve, reheat until piping hot and continue with step 5.

# Roasted lamb steaks with herbs & garlic

**The punchy Mediterranean flavours work so well with these tender lamb steaks – and the fact they're ready in just 30 mins is an extra bonus.**

Ready in 30 mins • 317 cals per serving • 19g fat • 7g sat fat

- ☐ 6x175g boneless lamb leg steaks
- ☐ 1 bulb garlic, split into cloves, unpeeled
- ☐ 2 shallots, peeled and finely chopped
- ☐ 2tbsp parsley, roughly chopped
- ☐ 2tbsp lemon thyme, roughly chopped
- ☐ 3 anchovies in olive oil, drained and finely chopped
- ☐ zest of 1 lemon
- ☐ 75g pitted kalamata olives
- ☐ 2tbsp olive oil
- ☐ small handful of fresh mint, chopped

1 Heat oven to Mark 6/200°C. Put the **lamb steaks** in a large roasting tin.

2 In a bowl, mix together the **garlic**, **shallots**, **parsley**, **lemon thyme**, **anchovies**, **lemon zest**, **olives** and **oil** and season with black pepper.

3 Spoon the mixture over the lamb and toss to coat. Transfer to the oven for 15 mins for medium rare or 20 mins for more well done.

4 Remove from the oven, loosely cover with foil and rest for 10 mins. Scatter **mint** over and serve with crispy, goose-fat roasties.

**tip** If you've got the time, prep the lamb ahead and leave in the fridge to marinate for a few hours – the flavour will be even better.

New-style roast

FEATURE & FOOD STYLING LUCY JESSOP. RECIPES TESTED BY: CATHERINE SMITH. ASSISTED BY: LUCY GOODCHILD. PHOTOS: MYLES NEW. PROP STYLING: RACHEL JUKES



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# How to Give your family faves a healthy makeover

Eating healthily doesn't mean going hungry. We've upped the flavour and cut down on the cals in these dishes to make them filling and tasty, but easier on the waistline. And we've even done the costs for you, too!

**ALL RECIPES SERVE 4 UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED**

£2.30 per person

## Guilt-free chicken curry

Hurrah, a good-for-you curry that's so delish you won't even miss the not-so-healthy bits!

Ready in 30 mins ● 444 cals per serving ● 9g fat ● 1g sat fat ● 1 of your 5-a-day

### BUY FRESH

- ☐ 4x150g free-range chicken breasts, cut into bite-sized chunks
- ☐ 1 red chilli, finely chopped
- ☐ 5tbsp 0% fat Greek yogurt
- ☐ 15g fresh coriander, chopped

### CHECK YOU'VE GOT

- ☐ ½tbsp olive oil
- ☐ 1 large onion, sliced
- ☐ 5tbsp tikka paste (we like Patak's)
- ☐ 400g tin cherry tomatoes (we like Waitrose own)
- ☐ 250ml chicken stock
- ☐ 1tbsp tomato ketchup
- ☐ 200g basmati rice, cooked, to serve

## How to

1 Heat the **oil** in a deep, non-stick frying pan and fry the **onion** over a low heat for 5 mins. Remove from the pan and set aside. Add the **chicken** to the pan and brown over a medium-high heat for 5 mins. Add the **tikka paste** and **chilli** and cook for a further 2 mins.

2 Return the onions to the pan and acd the **cherry tomatoes** and **stock**. Bring to the boil, then simmer gently for 15 mins.

3 Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the **yogurt**, **tomato ketchup** and **coriander**. Serve with the **basmati rice**.

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*Mouthwatering comfort food that's on the table in a flash – perfect!*

£1.43 per person

# No-bake ham mac 'n' cheese

This lighter version of the classic dish includes veg, so you'll be on your way your 5-a-day... yippee!

Ready in 20 mins ● 284 cals per serving ● 14g fat ● 9g sat fat ● 1 of your 5-a-day

**BUY FRESH**

- ☐ 125g tenderstem broccoli, cut into 4cm pieces
- ☐ 125g pack Boursin Light
- ☐ 125g cherry tomatoes, halved
- ☐ 80g smoked ham, chopped
- ☐ 30g half-fat Cheddar cheese, grated

**CHECK YOU'VE GOT**

- ☐ 250g macaroni
- ☐ 30g butter
- ☐ 30g plain flour
- ☐ 2tsp English mustard powder
- ☐ 450ml semi-skimmed milk
- ☐ a good grating of nutmeg
- ☐ 20g breadcrumbs

## How to

1 Cook the **macaroni** for 4 mins in boiling water. Add the **broccoli** to the pan and cook for a further 4 mins, then drain well.

2 Melt the **butter** in a large pan and stir in the **flour** and **mustard powder** to make a paste. Cook for 1 min, stirring, then gradually add the **milk** to make a smooth sauce. Slowly bring to the boil, stirring, then add the **Boursin** and **nutmeg** and simmer for 2 mins until the sauce begins to thicken. Heat the grill to high.

3 Stir in **tomatoes**, **ham**, macaroni and broccoli and season. Transfer to a 1.5-litre dish, top with **Cheddar** and **breadcrumbs** and grill for 3-4 mins until golden.

**tip** Toast the leftover bits of pitta bread and use to dip in humous or taramasalata.

£1.19 per person

# Pitta pizzas with home-made wedges

Much healthier than a takeaway and easy to make, too – and the low-fat wedges are soooo addictive!

Ready in 50 mins ● 553 cals per serving ● 16g fat ● 5g sat fat ● 0 of your 5-a-day, so serve with extra salad on the side

**BUY FRESH**

- ☐ 4 wholemeal pitta breads
- ☐ 200g mozzarella light, torn into pieces
- ☐ 2tbsp green pesto
- ☐ 2 small handfuls of rocket

**CHECK YOUVE GOT**

- ☐ 900g large King Edward potatoes, cut into thin wedges (8-12 per potato)
- ☐ 1tbsp olive oil
- ☐ 4tbsp tomato pizza topping (we like Napolina)
- ☐ 1 small red onion, thinly sliced
- ☐ 12 pitted green olives, chopped

## How to

1 Heat the oven to Mark 7/220°C. On a large baking tray, toss the **potatoes** with the **oil** and season with salt. Bake for 40-50 mins, turning halfway through.

2 Meanwhile, score a line round the edge of one side of each **pitta**, 1cm from the edge. Remove this thin layer of pitta to leave a rim (a bit like a pastry case) to hold the filling. Put the pitta bases into the oven for 2 mins to toast until crisp and firm.

3 Spread the pitta bases with **pizza topping**, then scatter over the **onion**, **olives**, **mozzarella** and **pesto**. Bake for 10 mins. Scatter with rocket and serve with the wedges.

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**tip** If you don't have a microwave, poach the salmon in boiling water for 5 mins.

£2.34 per person

# Tastes-so-good salmon fish cakes

Everyone loves a fishcake and they don't get much better than these for flavour and gorgeousness.

Ready in 45 mins • 377 cals per serving • 17g fat • 3g sat fat • 0 of your 5-a-day, so serve with green bean salad

## BUY FRESH

- ☐ 500g skinless salmon fillets
- ☐ 8 spring onions, finely sliced
- ☐ 50g watercress, chopped

## CHECK YOU'VE GOT

- ☐ 550g King Edward potatoes, peeled and cut into large chunks
- ☐ 1tbsp Dijon mustard
- ☐ 2tbsp capers, drained, rinsed and finely chopped
- ☐ plain flour, for dusting
- ☐ 1tbsp olive oil

## How to

1 Heat oven to Mark 4/200°C. Cook the **potatoes** in boiling, salted water for 15 mins until tender, then mash. Meanwhile, cook the **salmon** in the microwave for 3 mins on high until just done. Drain off the juices and cool.

2 Mix the salmon and mash with the **spring onions**, **mustard**, **watercress**, **capers**; season well. Shape into 8 equal-sized fish cakes and dust lightly with **flour**.

3 Heat the **oil** in a non-stick pan and fry fish cakes in batches for 1-2 mins on each side. Transfer to a non-stick baking tray and bake for 10-15 mins until piping hot through. Serve with a **green bean salad**.

Cut through the crisp cheesy top and spoon out the flavoursome filling ...mmm!

£1.38 per person

# Best-ever veggie lasagne

We love this tasty alternative to our Italian fave – the lentils make sure you get plenty of protein.

Serves 4-6 • Ready in 1 hr • 463-308 cals per serving • 20-13g fat • 11-7g sat fat • 3-4 of your 5-a-day

**BUY FRESH**

- ☐ 1 courgette, chopped
- ☐ 1 small aubergine, chopped
- ☐ 125g mushrooms, sliced
- ☐ 400g tin Puy lentils, drained
- ☐ 1 small handful of basil, freshly chopped
- ☐ 250g half-fat crème fraîche
- ☐ 80g low-fat Cheddar, grated

**CHECK YOU'VE GOT**

- ☐ 1tbsp olive oil
- ☐ 1 onion, chopped
- ☐ 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- ☐ 400g tin chopped tomatoes
- ☐ 250ml veg stock
- ☐ ½tsp hot chilli powder
- ☐ 1tbsp cornflour
- ☐ 6-8 lasagne sheets
- ☐ jar Gaea flame roasted red peppers
- ☐ 40g Parmesan, grated

## How to

1 Heat the oven to Mark 4/180°C. In a large pan heat ½tbsp **oil** and cook the **onion**, **courgette**, **garlic** and **aubergine** for 5 mins, stirring occasionally. Add the **mushrooms** and cook for a further 5 mins. Add the **tomatoes**, **lentils**, **stock**, **basil** and **chilli powder**, simmer for 15 mins, then season to taste.

2 Mix the **crème fraîche** with **cornflour** and **Cheddar**. Spread one-third of the veg over the base of a 1.5-litre ovenproof dish, top with a layer of Cheddar sauce, then half the **lasagne sheets** and half the **roasted peppers**. Repeat and finish with Cheddar sauce. Sprinkle over **Parmesan**. Bake for 30-40 mins.

>

# Cook once... eat twice

## MEAL 1 £1.32 per person

## Turkey spag bol

If you're not fussed about the cals, you can use beef or lamb mince instead.

SERVES 4 • Ready in 1 hr • 551 cals per serving • 16.5g fat • 5g sat fat • 1 of your 5-a-day

1 Heat 1tbsp **olive oil** in a large pan and fry 750g **turkey mince** for 5–10 mins, then set aside. Heat 1tbsp oil and fry 1 large **onion**, chopped, for 5 mins, then add 4 **garlic cloves**, crushed, 3 sticks **celery**, chopped, and 2 medium **carrots**, diced, and cook for 5 mins.

2 Add 2x70g packs **pancetta** or lean **bacon**, chopped, and fry until it begins to turn golden. Return the turkey to the pan and add 3x400g tins **chopped tomatoes**, 2 **bay leaves**, 2tsp **dried oregano** and 500ml **chicken stock**. Bring to the boil and simmer for 30–40 mins until reduced and thickened.

3 Set aside one-third of the Bolognese to make the chilli. Serve the rest with 250g **dried spaghetti**, cooked according to pack instructions.

## MEAL 2 £2.07 per person

## Chilli jackets with cool salsa

This is the easiest way to turn boring spuds into a fab, filling supper.

SERVES 2 • Ready in 30 mins • 600 cals per serving • 24g fat • 7g sat fat • 1 of your 5-a-day

1 Heat the oven to Mark 6/200°C. Microwave 2 **baking potatoes**, pricked, for 10 mins on full power, then crisp up in the oven for 20 mins until cooked through.

2 Meanwhile, put the **leftover Turkey spag bol** into a pan with 200g tinned **kidney beans**, drained, 1tbsp **tomato ketchup**, ½–1tsp **hot-smoked paprika**, 1tsp ground **cumin**, 1tsp ground **coriander** and 250ml **chicken stock** and bring to the boil. Simmer for 10 mins.

3 For the salsa, mix together 2 **tomatoes**, finely chopped, ½ ripe **avocado**, diced, ½ **red onion**, finely diced, and the juice of ½ **lime**. Serve the chilli with the jacket potatoes, topped with the salsa.

FEATURE & FOOD STYLING: LUCY JESSOP. RECIPES: SAL HENLEY ASSISTED BY CATHERINE SMITH. PHOTOS: CHARLIE RICHARDS. PROP STYLING: RACHEL JUKES



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# How to Cook perfect rice

Rice is a fab store-cupboard ingredient with so many uses – from creamy risottos to fluffy pilafs and comforting rice pud, we've got it covered. With these easy recipes and fail-safe tips, you'll never have gloopy rice again!

## What's the difference?

**LONG-GRAIN RICE**
The long, thin grains means it will cook to separate, dry grains. Varieties include:

- **BASMATI** – used for most Indian rice dishes like biryani, kedgeree and pilafs. It has a better flavour than American.
- **JASMINE** – has a mild, floral flavour and is often used in Thai recipes.
- **AMERICAN** – widely used, but rather bland compared to basmati.

**MEDIUM-GRAIN RICE**
Has a slightly shorter grain than long grain, generally used for rice salads. Varieties include:

- **PAELLA RICE** – the starch in the medium grain gives a creamy finish to paella.
- **ITALIAN ARBORIO RICE** – risotto is made using medium-short grain varieties that have undeveloped starch in the centre of each grain, which gives a firm bite to the rice once cooked.

**SHORT-GRAIN RICE**
With even shorter grains, it has the highest starch level and goes sticky once cooked. Used most widely in Asia as its stickiness means it's easier to eat with chopsticks. Other varieties include:

- **ITALIAN CARNOROLI RICE** – similar to Arborio but with even shorter grains, it's perfect for risottos.
- **PUDDING RICE** – round grain is perfect for long, slow cooking in the oven.

## Fed up with your rice sticking together?

**Follow these easy steps for really fluffy result**

1 **Soak or wash the rice before cooking** Rinse long-grain rice in running cold water until it runs clear to remove any excess starch, which makes the rice stick together during cooking.

2 **Cook in a large quantity of simmering water** Don't boil rapidly as this will make the grains break up, and never stir long-grained varieties, as this can crush the grains, releasing starch and making the rice sticky.

3 **Steam to finish off** When the rice is almost cooked, remove from the heat, drain well and return to the pan, cover with a lid and leave for 2-3 mins to finish cooking in its own steam.

**tip** When cooking risotto, you need to stir it constantly to help the rice grains release their starch, which is what gives it a creamy consistency.

## Cook perfect risotto

# Creamy mushroom & pancetta risotto with blue cheese

**All our fave ingredients in one gorgeous risotto!**

**Serves 4-6 • Ready in 40 mins • 718-478 cals per serving • 32-21g fat • 13-9g sat fat**

### You'll need...

- ☐ 10g dried porcini mushrooms, roughly chopped
- ☐ 25g butter
- ☐ 2tbsp olive oil
- ☐ 1 small onion, finely chopped
- ☐ 70g pack cubetti di pancetta
- ☐ 200g chestnut mushrooms, quartered
- ☐ 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- ☐ 8-10 sprigs of fresh thyme
- ☐ 350g Arborio rice
- ☐ 150ml white wine
- ☐ 1.2 litres hot chicken stock
- ☐ 75g-100g Roquefort cheese (or other creamy blue cheese), crumbled

**1** Put the **dried mushrooms** in a bowl and pour boiling water over to just cover. Leave to soak for 20 mins.

**2** Meanwhile, melt the **butter** in a large deep frying pan, add the **oil** and **onion** and gently cook for 10 mins. Fry the **pancetta** and **chestnut mushrooms** in another pan for 5 mins until golden. Add the **garlic**, **thyme** and the **rice** to the pan with the onion and stir to coat the grains in the oil. Cook for 2-3 mins, stirring, massaging the grains until they begin to turn translucent.

**3** Increase the heat, pour in the **wine** and simmer until reduced by half. Add the hot **stock**, a ladleful at a time, stirring constantly, allowing each to be absorbed before adding the next. This should take about 15 mins.

**4** Stir in the pancetta, porcini (and soaking liquor, grit removed) and mushrooms, and cook for a further 5-10 mins until the rice is al dente and has a creamy consistency.

**5** Remove from the heat, remove the thyme sprigs and stir in the **blue cheese**. Season with black pepper and serve immediately.

### It helps to know...

✓ For risotto you need to use Italian medium-short grain rice like Arborio or Carnaroli varieties.

✓ Cooked risotto should still have a firm bite to the rice, this texture is called *al dente* – Italians also eat pasta in the same way.

✓ Risotto rice absorbs about 4-5 times its volume in liquid, which is a good way to work out how much stock you'll need.

✓ It's easier to cook risotto for smaller numbers of people as there's lots of stirring involved, so don't cook for more than six.

cut out and keep

# Cook perfect fried rice...

## Best-ever special Asian rice

**This Chinese-inspired dish makes a great speedy supper.**

**Serves 4 • Ready in 25 mins • 567 cals per serving • 20g fat • 3g sat fat**

### You'll need...

- ☐ 250g easy-cook basmati rice
- ☐ 4tbsp sweet chilli sauce
- ☐ 1tbsp light soy sauce
- ☐ 1tbsp sesame oil
- ☐ 2 free-range chicken breasts, cut into bite-sized chunks
- ☐ 4tbsp vegetable oil
- ☐ 100g green beans, trimmed and cut in half
- ☐ 1 red pepper, deseeded and sliced
- ☐ 150g raw prawns, peeled
- ☐ 15g root ginger, peeled and grated
- ☐ 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- ☐ 2 free-range eggs, beaten
- ☐ 6 spring onions, sliced
- ☐ toasted sesame seeds, to serve

1 Cook the **rice** according to pack instructions, drain in a sieve and cover with kitchen towel. Mix the **sweet chilli sauce**, **soy sauce** and **sesame oil** together in a bowl. Set aside.

2 Heat a wok until smoking, cook the **chicken** n the **vegetable oil** for 2-3 mins until golden. Remove and set aside.

3 Add the **green beans** and **red pepper** with a little water and cook for 2 mins. Add the **prawns**, **root ginger**, **garlic** and stir-fry for 2 mins. Stir in the cooked rice, then push to one side of the wok before adding the **egg** to the other side. Let the egg cook a little before stirring into the rice.

4 Return the chicken to the pan with the sauces and **spring onion** and stir until it's all piping hot and cooked through. Serve sprinkled with the **sesame seeds**.

**tip** We've used easy-cook rice in this recipe as it's less likely to break up when stirred.

# Cook perfect, fluffy basmati rice

## Spicy salmon & coriander kedgeree

**Delicious curried rice with hot smoked salmon – a perfect brunch!**

**Serves 4-6 • Ready in 25 mins • 570-353 cals per serving • 17-11g fat • 3-2g sat fat**

### You'll need...

- ☐ 300g basmati rice (we like Tilda)
- ☐ 1 large onion, sliced
- ☐ 2tbsp vegetable oil
- ☐ ½tsp ground turmeric
- ☐ 2tbsp biryani paste (we like Patak's)
- ☐ 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- ☐ 750ml hot vegetable stock
- ☐ 4 large free-range eggs, at room temperature
- ☐ 125g hot smoked salmon, flaked
- ☐ 15g fresh coriander, chopped
- ☐ 120g frozen peas
- ☐ lemon wedges, to serve

1 Put the **rice** in a bowl and, with a clean hand, beat the rice under cold running water for about 1 min until the water runs clear. Cover with fresh cold water, leave to stand for 10 mins, then drain.

2 Meanwhile, in a large deep frying pan cook the **onion** in the **oil** for 5 mins over a low heat.

3 Stir in the **turmeric**, **biryani paste** and **garlic** and cook for 1 min. Add the drained rice and stir to coat. Pour in the **stock**, bring to the boil, lower the heat, cover and simmer for 8-10 mins. Turn off heat and leave to stand with lid on.

4 Meanwhile, put the **eggs** into a pan, cover with cold water, bring to the boil. Time them for 5 mins from when they begin to boil, then run under cold water to cool. Peel and cut into quarters.

5 Stir the **salmon**, **coriander** and **peas** through the rice. Serve with the eggs and **lemon wedges** to squeeze over.

## It helps to know...

- ✓ **The longer you soak rice, the shorter the cooking time.**
- ✓ **To measure out rice just use a measuring jug and allow 65ml per person.**
- ✓ **We've cooked the rice in this recipe using the absorption method, with 1½ times the volume of liquid to rice. This prevents the rice from overcooking.**

>

# < Cook perfect rice pudding

## The ultimate rice pudding

**This is such a deliciously nostalgic pud and so easy to make, too!**

**Serves 6 • Ready in 2 hrs 15 mins • 444 cals per serving • 34g fat • 21g sat fat**

### You'll need...

- ☐ 600ml whole milk
- ☐ 300ml double cream
- ☐ 60g caster sugar
- ☐ ¼ whole nutmeg, grated
- ☐ 1 vanilla pod, split lengthways, seeds scraped out
- ☐ 100g short-grain rice
- ☐ 25g butter
- ☐ cherry compote, to serve

1 Heat the oven to Mark 2/ 150°C. Put the **milk**, **cream**, **sugar**, **nutmeg** and **vanilla pod** and **seeds** into a heavy-based non-stick saucepan, gently bring to the boil, then remove from the heat. Put the **rice** into a 1.5-litre shallow ovenproof dish, pour the hot milk over, removing the pod. Stir, then dot with **butter** and bake in the oven for 30 mins.

2 Remove and stir before cooking for a further 30 mins. Stir once more, then bake for a further hour.

3 Remove from the oven and leave for 5 mins before serving with **cherry compote**.

**tip** **Add a handful of raisins to your pudding before baking – they'll go all lovely and juicy.**

### It helps to know...

✓ For rice pudding, use a short-grain rice. Some supermarkets sell 'pudding rice', but if you can't get hold of any, go for Carnoroli instead.

✓ If you fancy a change, use 2x400g tins coconut milk and 100mls of milk in place of milk and cream.

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How to

# Irresistible... Apple & cinnamon crumble cake

This is perfect for afternoon tea or served as a dessert still warm from the oven with lots of cream

Have a go – it's easy!

Nursery food, comfort food and a big dollop of naughtiness – just what's needed on a cold wintery day

# Apple & cinnamon crumble cake

Ready in 1 hr 30 mins • 637-509 per serving • 39-31g fat • 19-15g sat fat

SERVES 8-10

Is it a cake or is it a pud? Who cares – it's delicious!

**FOR THE TOPPING**

- ☐ 50g cold butter
- ☐ 75g plain flour
- ☐ 50g demerara sugar
- ☐ 50g blanched almonds, roughly chopped

**FOR THE CAKE**

- ☐ 225g butter, softened
- ☐ 4 eating apples, eg Cox's, peeled, cored and cut into thick slices
- ☐ 225g golden caster sugar
- ☐ 1½tsp ground cinnamon
- ☐ 4 medium (or 3 large) free-range eggs
- ☐ 150g self-raising flour
- ☐ 50g ground almonds
- ☐ 1tsp vanilla extract

1 Heat oven to Mark 4/180°C. Grease a 23cm spring-clip tin and line the base. For the topping, rub together the **butter** and **flour** with a pinch of salt, then mix in the **sugar** until it resembles lumpy breadcrumbs. Stir through the **nuts** and chill in the fridge.

2 For the cake, melt 25g of the **butter** in a frying pan, add the **apples**, then sprinkle with 25g of the **sugar** and all the **cinnamon**. Cook on a medium heat for 4-5 mins until caramely (the apples should be tender, but not mushy). Set aside to cool.

3 Beat the remaining butter and sugar together, then gradually add the **eggs** along with 2tbsp of the **flour** to prevent it curdling. Using a metal spoon, fold in the remaining flour, the **almonds** and the **vanilla extract** in stages, until combined.

4 Spoon about two-thirds of the mixture into the tin, top with the apple, then the rest of the cake mixture. Finally sprinkle the crumble mixture on top. Bake in the oven for 50 mins-1 hr. Cover loosely with a little foil if it starts to brown too quickly.

5 Cool in the tin for a few mins before transferring to a cooling rack.

## Also try these sweet appley treats...

### Spiced apple puds

Ready in 45 mins • 390 cals per serving • 22g fat • 13g sat fat

1 Heat oven to Mark 4/180°C. Peel, core and chop 3 Cox's **apples**. Put the apple in a saucepan with 15g **butter**, a good pinch **ground cinnamon**, 2-3tbsp **caster sugar** and 2tbsp **rum**, **brandy** or **water** and cook over a medium heat for 5 mins, until the apples are quite soft. Spoon into 4x150-200ml buttered ramekins.

2 Whisk together 85g **self-raising flour**, 85g **caster sugar**, 85g softened **butter**, 1 large free-range **egg** and 1tsp **vanilla extract**. Once smooth, spoon onto the apples and bake for 30 mins, or until springy to the touch. Serve with **whipped cream**.

### Cheat's apple frangipane pie

Ready in 50 mins • 283-287 cals per serving • 17-13g fat • 5-4g sat fat

1 Heat the oven to Mark 4/180°C. Put 125g **marzipan** into a food processor with 1 medium free-range **egg** and whizz until smooth. Stir in 75g **self-raising flour**, sifted. Spoon the mixture into a 205g/22cm ready-cooked sweet pastry case and level the surface.

2 Melt 15g **butter** in a large frying pan, add 4-5 small **dessert apples**, peeled, cored and quartered. Cook over a medium heat until golden, sprinkle with 2tbsp **caster sugar** and cook for a further min, stirring. Spoon on top of the marzipan filling, then transfer to a baking tray. Bake for 25-30 mins, until golden.

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How to

# Best in season Purple sprouting broccoli

Just what we need at this time of year – something that's delicious, healthy and packed full of goodness

**SWEET & TENDER PURPLE SPROUTING BROCCOLI**

The purple sprouting broccoli season is short and sweet, running from mid February to mid April. It's easy to grow, being hardy enough to brave the cold winter weather, but its delicate flavour makes it taste like a spring vegetable – a welcome change after a winter of root veg. And there's more good news – it's bursting with vitamins and only needs quick, light cooking, so there's no long complicated recipes – bonus!

Make this!

## Oriental stir-fried broccoli

**Fresh, zingy and with a real kick, this is addictive.**

Serves 2 • Ready in 10 mins • 90 cals per serving • 6.5g fat • 1g sat fat

Cook 200g **purple-sprouting broccoli** in boiling water for 2–3 mins until tender, but still firm. Drain well and pat dry. Meanwhile, heat 1tbsp **olive oil** in a wok, add 2 cloves of **garlic**, finely chopped, 1 **red chilli**, finely chopped, and 15g **root ginger**, peeled and cut into matchsticks. Gently fry for 2 mins, add 2tbsp **soy sauce** and the broccoli. Stir fry for 2–3 mins on a high heat until hot through.

## More tasty ways with purple sprouting broccoli...

◆ **EASY CRAB PASTA**
Stir-fry broccoli as before, but omit soy sauce. Toss with cooked linguine, olive oil, tinned crab and lime juice.

◆ **WEEKEND RISOTTO**
Add Parmesan and pesto to a risotto, then add cooked broccoli for last few mins. Top with toasted pine nuts.

◆ **LUNCHTIME FRITTATA**
Add stir-fried courgettes and broccoli to a frittata along with chopped mint and crumbled feta cheese.

>

# Also in season...

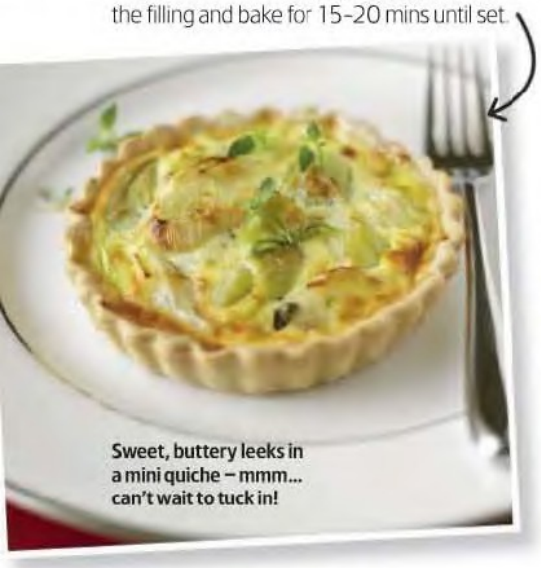
## Leeks

**MAKE POSH LEEK & GRUYÈRE TARTS**

**At their best, leeks should be pale green, firm and not too big.**

Serves 4 • Ready in 45 mins • 463 cals per serving • 32g fat • 13g sat fat

Heat oven to Mark 5/190°C. Roll out 250g **shortcrust pastry** thin enough to cut out 4x12cm circles. Use to line 4x10cm tart tins, then line with parchment and fill with baking beans. Bake for 15 mins until pale golden. Meanwhile, melt a knob of **butter** in a large pan, add 2 **leeks**, sliced, and cook gently for 5-6 mins until soft. Season well and add 1tsp **thyme leaves**. Remove parchment and baking beans from pastry cases. Divide the leeks between the cases, then top with 100g cubed **Gruyère**, **Brie** or other cheese. Beat 2 medium free-range **eggs**, pour over the filling and bake for 15-20 mins until set.



Sweet, buttery leeks in a mini quiche – mmm... can't wait to tuck in!

**GO WILD WITH GARLIC!**
Wild garlic is in season now – eat the leaves not the bulb. They have a delicious mild flavour and taste great raw in salads or cooked in soups and risottos.

## Scallops

**PAN-FRY SUCCULENT SCALLOPS WITH PANCETTA**

**It's good to eat scallops before they spawn between April and September.**

Serves 2 • Ready in 10 mins • 263 cals per serving • 18g fat • 5g sat fat

Heat a non-stick frying pan, add 4 slices **pancetta** and cook over a medium heat until crisp. Break into shards. Remove from the pan and set aside. Increase the heat, add 6 large **scallops** to the pan and cook for no longer than 1 min on each side, until just cooked through. Season well. Mix 2 large handfuls of **lambs' lettuce** or other salad leaves with 1tbsp **mustard dressing**. Divide between 2 plates, add a few pieces of pancetta, and three scallops. Serve immediately.

## This month's must-tries

**When you're at the shops, look out for...**

| | ✓ STORE | ✓ TRY | ✓ USE IT UP |
|---|---|---|---|
| Wild salmon | Buy fish with shiny skin and bright eyes. It shouldn't smell fishy. Keep in the fridge. Best used as fresh as possible but should keep for 2-3 days. | Wild salmon has a much better, more delicate flavour than farmed, so poach or steam and serve simply with hollandaise sauce or watercress pesto. | Mix cooked salmon with mashed potato, peas and horseradish for tasty fishcakes. |
| Spring onions | Look for firm, dry stalks. Store in paper bags in the fridge where they'll keep for 3-4 days. | Delicious added to stir-fries at the end of cooking. Or add freshly chopped to salads. | Stir into creamy mash for a cheat's colcannon – serve with sausages and onion gravy. Or add to cheesy omelettes. |
| Mussels | The last of the season – so enjoy! Eat as soon as possible after buying them. Discard any open raw mussels, and any that don't open during cooking. | Add to a spicy tomato sauce and serve with pasta, or cook simply with garlic, white wine, celery and cream, finish with parsley and eat with crusty bread. | Mussels should be eaten super fresh, so if you can't eat them on the day, pop them in the freezer. |

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